

Located in the Russian River region 75 miles north of San Francisco, this 805-acre park features a magnificent grove of ancient redwoods, self-guided nature trails, and picnic facilities. As you stroll through this beautiful old-growth redwood forest, you will see some of the tallest and oldest trees remaining in this part of California. The Parson Jones Tree is about 310 feet high; the 308-foot Colonel Armstrong Tree is more than 1,400 years old.

During the 1870s, this area was set aside as a natural park and botanic gardens by Colonel James B. Armstrong, an early-day lumberman who recognized the beauty and natural value of the forests he harvested. Today this is the largest remaining ancient-growth redwood forest in Sonoma County. It is a living reminder of the magnificent primeval redwood forests that covered much of this area before logging operations began during the 19th century.

## Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve



tallest redwood is 368 feet high. The coast redwood is also one of the world's oldest living things (some survive for as long as 2,000 years). They grow naturally only along a narrow coastal belt from southern Oregon to central California where moderate climate combines with heavy winter rain and frequent summer fog. Coast redwoods reach their maximum size and height on alluvial flats like the one beside Fife Creek. Interpretive facilities designed to help park visitors enjoy and learn about this ancient redwood grove include a visitor center at the park entrance that is staffed daily by knowledgeable docents, self-guided trails, and trailside displays. Visitors can obtain park information and publications, and view the center's natural history exhibits before beginning their tour of the grove.

The self-guided Armstrong Nature Trail is an easy walk through the grove. Printed guides for the nature trail are available at the visitor center or ranger station. Another interpretive feature in the grove, the Discovery Trail, was designed for people who are visually impaired, though it can be enjoyed by all park visitors.

The Redwood Forest Theater is of historic interest. Once used for the presentation of various artistic events, it now provides visitors with a majestic place to sit and ponder the beauty of the surrounding grove. Tables and barbecue facilities are available in the picnic area, which includes a group picnic site that can be reserved through the park office. Check with park staff for current information about any interpretive programs that may be scheduled during your visit.

### Park Interpretive Services

Twenty miles of hiking and equestrian trails invite energetic visitors to explore and enjoy this wild and scenic area. Though Austin Creek State Recreation Area's 5,683 acres are close to urban development, the park's rugged topography gives a sense of isolation from the hustle and bustle of civilization. Elevations within the park range from 150 feet above sea level to almost 1,900 feet on Marble Mine Ridge. The park's open forests and rolling hills offer a striking contrast to the cool, dark redwood grove in Armstrong Redwoods. Springtime wildflower displays include Douglas firs, buttercups, lupines, brodiaeas, California poppies and shooting stars.

The grasslands, chaparral, conifer, oak wood-land and riparian habitats of Austin Creek State Recreation Area are home to a wide range of native animals and birds. Squirrels, deer, raccoons, foxes, coyotes, skunks, bobcats, black bears, and an occasional mountain lion are some of the native animals seen here. Turkeys and feral pigs are among the introduced species common to the area. Bird life in the park includes the colorful wood duck and the rare spot-tailed owl. Great blue herons, white-tailed kites, and other towed vehicles are also prohibited. Backcountry trail camps are located at the Tom King, Gilliam Creek and Mannings Flat Campgrounds. Each campsite has a table and fire ring. Pit toilets are located nearby. A year-round stream is nearby, but the water must be purified before drinking. Use of a microfilter is recommended. The trail camps are available first-come, first-served. A backcountry camping permit is required and can be obtained at the Armstrong Redwoods ranger station during business hours. Permits for day hiking are not required.

## Austin Creek State Recreation Area

### Please Remember

**All plants and animals are protected.** Please do not disturb the natural features you find in the park. If you see a rattlesnake near a campground, please report it to a park ranger.

**Stay on designated trails.** Soil erosion and damage to the root systems of the redwoods are the result of off-trail walking and riding.

**Vehicles are permitted only on paved roads.** The maximum speed limit is 15 miles per hour. All park roads are narrow, so be prepared for oncoming traffic. Vehicles traveling downhill must yield to uphill traffic on the mountain roads of Austin Creek.

**Dogs must be kept on a leash** during the day and in a vehicle or tent at night. They are not permitted on the trails or in the back country camps.

**Hunting** and the possession of weapons are prohibited anywhere in the park.

**Fishing** is not permitted in any of the streams.

**Dead and down wood** must be left undisturbed to replenish the soil and provide food and shelter for other plants and animals. Firewood can be purchased at the park entrance from a seasonal camphost or the park ranger.

**Open fires** must be confined to the stoves provided. Check with the visitor center or ranger station on fire restrictions.

**Campground quiet hours** are from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Amplified music that can be heard outside your immediate area is prohibited at all times.

quail, various woodpeckers, ravens, hawks, and flycatchers are frequently seen. Aquatic animals in Bullfrog Pond include sunfish, black bass, and bullfrogs. Trout, salmon, and California newts are found in the streams. Licensed anglers may fish the pond, but all park streams are closed to fishing in order to protect vitally important spawning habitat.

Austin Creek's historic Pond Farm Pottery was the home, workshop, and school of the internationally renowned ceramic artist, Marguerite Wildenhain, who settled here after World War II. Formerly a student at Germany's famous Bauhaus school of design, Wildenhain enjoyed and was inspired by the peace and natural beauty of this area.

Twenty-three family campsites are located near Bullfrog Pond. First-come, first-served campsites are available throughout the year. Tables, fire rings, flush toilets and drinkable water are provided, but no sinks or showers are currently available. Vehicle access to the campground is by way of a steep, narrow, winding, two and one-half mile mountain road. For safety reasons, vehicles more than 20 feet in length are not allowed on this road. Vehicles with trailers or other towed vehicles are also prohibited. Backcountry trail camps are located at the Tom King, Gilliam Creek and Mannings Flat Campgrounds. Each campsite has a table and fire ring. Pit toilets are located nearby. A year-round stream is nearby, but the water must be purified before drinking. Use of a microfilter is recommended. The trail camps are available first-come, first-served. A backcountry camping permit is required and can be obtained at the Armstrong Redwoods ranger station during business hours. Permits for day hiking are not required.

### Camping





PAVED ROAD (Open to public)

SERVICE ROAD (no unauthorized motor vehicles)

RIDING & HIKING TRAIL (no vehicles or bicycles)

HIKING TRAIL ONLY (no vehicles, bicycles, horses or pack stock)

PARKING AREA

DISTANCE IN MILES BETWEEN POINTS

ACCESSIBLE FEATURE

CAMPGROUND

GROUP PICNIC AREA

LOCKED GATE

PARK RESIDENCE

PICNIC AREA

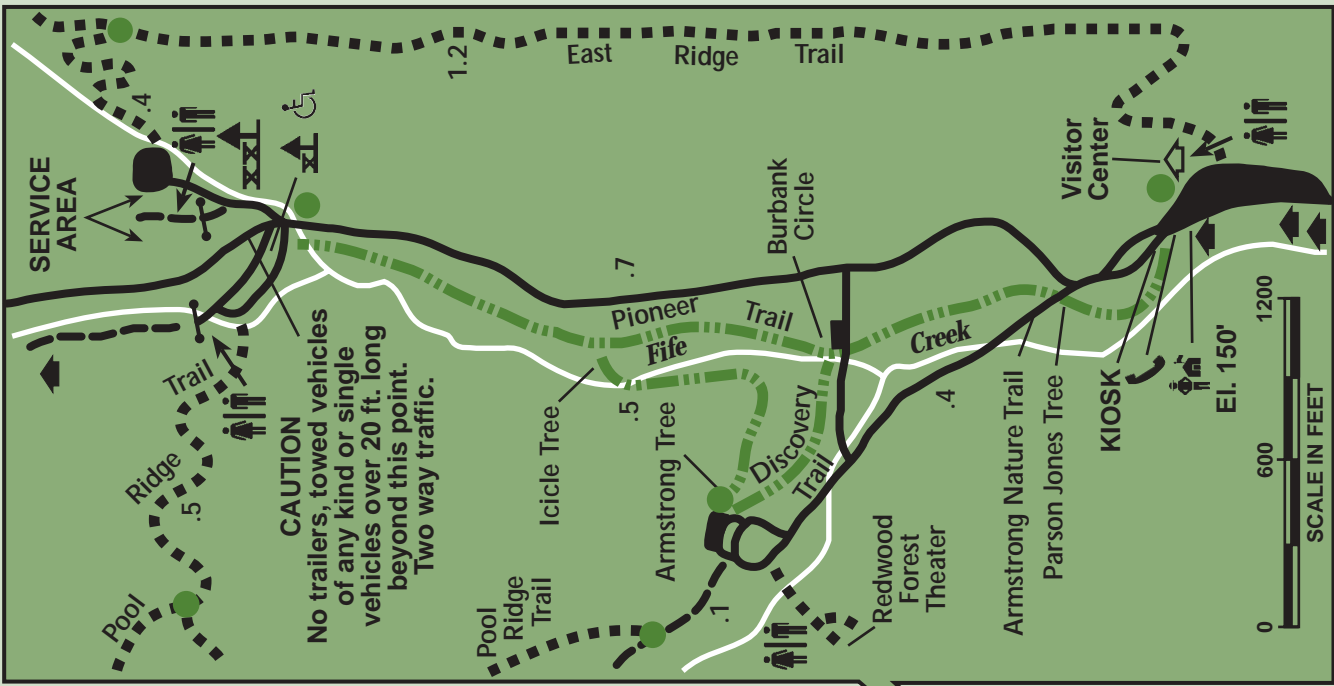
RANGER STATION

RESTROOMS

TELEPHONE

VIEW POINT

VISITOR CENTER



Park hours: 8 a.m. to one hour after sunset

No overnight stays are permitted in Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve.

Park boundaries periodically change, and private property surrounds the park in all directions. Please respect all signs and fences.

This park is supported in part through a nonprofit organization. For more information contact:  
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods  
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Duncans Mills, CA 95430  
(707) 869-9177  
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